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The Commonweal

January 13, 1950

Man, the Hunted

Grigore Gafencu

Christian Trade Unions

George G. Higgins

Memories of Henry James

Compton Mackenzie

VOLUME LI 15c NUMBER 14

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Early 1950

A year ago this column felt that the United States was losing ground in the cold war because "the gradual gains in sympathy and restoration in Western Europe seemed to be more than offset by current happenings in the Far East." It also spoke of Mr. Truman's coming efforts to put across the platform on which he was elected.

Despite all that has happened in the last twelve months, much about the prospect for 1950 is familiar. There is the same domestic emphasis on the fight for civil rights, social security, aid to education, national medical insurance. In these fields much still remains to be decided. Only the Brannan Plan has injected a new element in the tug-of-war between the high cost of living and government supports for farm commodities.

The biggest changes have taken place in foreign parts. The Berlin crisis has subsided; a Council of Europe has been formed; recovery in Western Europe is further advanced. All China has fallen to the Communists; the fate of Formosa hangs in the balance; Indonesia has gained her independence at long last; two Far Eastern conferences of major scope are currently taking place.

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Grinding an Old Axe

AMONG those who have been making New Year's resolutions in a properly grim mood are the politicians, for whom, suffice it to say, 1950 is an election year. The Democrats, already heavy with ammunition, would like to flush out of Congress every last Republican still standing against repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law or the welfare state. The Republicans have gotten a new slogan, "no more me-too-ism," and there are some among them who would now apply this formula even to foreign affairs. Led by Senator Wherry, they have come out against a bi-partisan foreign policy.

These Republicans feel that in the public mind (which is the voting mind), the Democrats get credit for all the foreign policy successes, such as the European Recovery Program, and the Republicans get dragged in only for a bi-partisan share in the failures, such as China. Yet, as they point out, our China policy is not bi-partisan. They believe, therefore, that the Republican Party should make itself the voice of the opposition and have nothing more to do with bi-partisanship, which works to the advantage of the Democrats.

In assessing this argument, one would like to know whether it is simply politics which moves the Wherry dissenters, or whether it is a belief that the bi-partisan policy itself is a failure, a poor technique for pressing American ideals and power abroad. When Robert Taft, who would not vote for the Atlantic Pact, now proclaims that we should hold Formosa, and when Herbert Hoover writes a public letter saying the same thing, it is pretty obvious that the Republicans, as a political party, are simply drawing up their big guns behind Senator Wherry. They have, in our Asia failure, a clear case for "no more me-too-ism" and that is good politics.

In some ways, the Democrats have asked for all this. They have not adequately consulted the Republicans on important parts of our policy, such as China and Palestine. Then, too, Mr. Truman is said to be resentful of Mr. Dulles' criticism of the domestic side of the Fair Deal—a mysterious attitude indeed. By cold-shouldering Mr. Dulles, one of the strongest Republican supporters of bi-partisanship, he has helped to chill all Republican enthusiasm for the bi-partisan policy.

Now it is true historically that politics has played hob with American foreign policy on a number of occasions, from the time of the Jay Treaty in Washington's administration to the rather tragic fight over the Versailles Treaty after World War I. Opposition to an administration's foreign policy has made for good politics, but not for the best foreign policy. Surely we do not want to silence opposition in this country, but if the opposition is based on political advantage, rather than on the national welfare, then it can, as it has before, seriously weaken our international influence and our resoluteness, as a nation, to back up a single course of action mutually decided upon.

AS FOR silencing all opposition, the debate over the Atlantic Pact is an example of the way the bi-partisan policy can prevent that: Mr. Taft, who did not join his fellow Republicans, Vandenberg and Dulles, in their support of the administration, was given all the time he wanted to voice his dissent and the Congressional voting record shows that his dissent gathered strength. In other words, the bi-partisan foreign policy is a technique which has proved the flexibility of our governing institutions: at a time when we have had to wage wars, hot and cold, in international affairs, when it has been, and continues to be, necessary to take decisive action without political profiteering, we have presented to the world a unified, determined and effective national force (when bi-partisanship has been adopted), without foregoing our democratic rights as individuals to protest and to dissent.

This, it would seem, is a considerable advancement toward American political maturity. If we are not to lose the advantages gained from this policy, the Democrats will have to extend the unwritten concept of bi-partisanship in a more fair-minded way to include the Republicans in all major decisions of foreign policy; the Republicans, in turn, will have to forego the political advantages Senator Wherry would like to win by scrapping the bi-partisan policy.

Designed, as it was, to serve this country in

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• NEXT WEEK

SOCIALISM INTO PERSONALISM

Even progressives progress. MICHAEL P. FOGARTY writes of changes in the British Labor Party and the Socialist movement in England, from the struggling Fabian days down to the triumphant present. The trend, he thinks, is away from classical socialist ideology and toward a neo-personalism.

"New ideas are as crude and unconvincing as new babies. It will take about a generation to change the Labor movement's mind. Is it surprising that even when the movement itself agrees on where it is going next, it should take still another generation to convince everyone else?"

an international crisis, the bi-partisan policy has demonstrated its merits; to abandon it now, one would have to believe that the international conflict has dissipated sufficiently to permit us to play politics again with foreign policy. That, it can safely be said, would be an expensive illusion.

The Quality of Mercy

ONLY a few weeks ago we read Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. Now when we come to write of mercy-killing the specter of that mass of misunderstanding rises up like some impassable wall. How to speak of moral principles to a mind like Blanshard's? How to break through the barrier separating the Catholic from the so-called modern mind? How to find words that will somehow be more than grist for the controversial mill; words that will convince rather than confuse, enlighten rather than enrage, mollify more than they madden? Blanshard is rude and unbelievably crude, but his is not a lonely voice crying out in the secularist wilderness. In his rejection of Christian tradition and reasoned morality, he speaks for millions. For Catholics to think otherwise would be a great illusion.

Paul Blanshard writes:

> In meeting the challenge of euthanasia the Catholic hierarchy [typically Blanshard: it is never the Church or Christian teaching or the word of God but always the hierarchy] had an opportunity to accept a realistic advance in the practice of mercy. The priests could easily have emphasized the special reasons why the remedy could be applied to good Catholics who had received Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, and were therefore ready to die. Each hour of blinding agony is likely to take the victim farther away from that peace of mind which is one of the primary aims of Catholic medicine in handling the dying.

When he reads something like that, the Catholic feels hopelessly cut off, out of communication, like a man speaking into a dead microphone. Making what is wrong right: for Catholics, just a matter of the priests saying so! And they can do that "easily!" Taking human life into one's own hands and preempting the rights of God: merely a medical "remedy." Sorrow for sin, reconciliation with God Himself, final purification on earth: all jumbled together into a facile and fashionable catchword, "peace of mind." The religion of Augustine and Aquinas innocently reduced to the level of a digest-magazine article.

A mind that has wandered that far from the Christian view of God and man and life itself cannot be reached by a few hundred words written for a magazine editorial. One would have to

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begin as a nun begins with a child: "Who made the world?," "Who is God?," "Why did God make you?" Then bit by bit through the drama of the Fall and the Incarnation; finally to the Christian Atonement and the divine mystery of suffering.

There may have been a time when one could have appealed to logic and reason and natural morality, but even that avenue has been cut off. The modern secularist mind doesn't *think* about morality; it *feels* its way, like a blind man groping in the dark.

One could speak of the political dangers involved. One could quote statements like that of Mrs. Robertson Jones, executive vice president of the Euthanasia Society of America, Inc., to show how easily a euthanasia leader might be seduced by the genocidal ambition of a Hitler. Mrs. Jones: "Every law, however unjust, should be obeyed and enforced." (New York *Times* January 3, 1950).

There are many things a man could say. But words have come to mean little in controversies of this kind. Words are the symbols for thought, and the proponents of euthanasia apparently do not consider them proper weapons. For them the elements of morality would better be symbolized by heart beats and the soft music of far-off strings. The Catholic in controversy with them—the Catholic armed with his logic, his syllogisms and the stern demands of reason—is left almost defenseless. There remain to him only prayer and penance, all the harsh weapons of the spirit which can call down the only true blessed mercy of God.

Sovereign Indonesia

IN the universal acclaim which greeted the birth of the United States of Indonesia during Christmas week, the distance between national hopes and realization of a stable and prosperous nationhood were momentarily forgotten. In the American papers attention was justifiably focused on our ambassador to the new state, Merle Cochran, who had been so instrumental under UN auspices in bringing the Netherlands - Indonesian negotiations, after eighteen months, to this happy result.

The new State is an aggregate of some 3,000 islands of the Malay Archipelago; it numbers 77,000,000 persons. About three-fifths of these live on the island of Java, which is the most densely populated area in the world, as well as one of the most productive. Most Indonesians live in thatched huts in primitive villages, there are only 18 cities; the economy is dominantly rural; literacy is said to be not more than 7 percent for the islands as a whole.

Another obstacle to self-government is the element of distance. From the Northeastern tip of Sumatra to eastern New Guinea (which Indonesia hopes to incorporate before the end of the year) is over 2,500 miles.

To maintain order will be a major task. Eastern Java, where Jakarta, the capital and former Dutch city of Batavia is located, is an area where Communism is intrenched. An uprising against the new government is expected to be ordered during the coming year. Then, the western end of this principal island is threatened by a Moslem revolt. Besides, there are the two million people in Celebes, Amon and Timor—many of them better educated—who wish to remain under Dutch rule. These are not likely to resort to arms, however.

Finally, the islands' natural riches have served as a prize for which rival nations and empires have long contended. Today Soviet Russia appears to be the only imaginable foreign aspirant to these sources of oil, rubber, tin, quinine, lead and the rest. Yet this concentration of actual and potential wealth also tempts leaders and groups within the islands to seize the reins of power.

For all these reasons the aid which must be forthcoming for the United States of Indonesia during her first years is extensive and complex. The maintenance of internal order will require outside shipments of a military sort—at least adequate supplies of the latest small arms. It also involves the solid moral support of friendly powers, and of the UN itself, against possible foreign encroachments.

Closely allied to this is the economic problem, which is aggravated by the destruction visited by the Japanese occupying forces. President Sukarno was not long in issuing a warm invitation to foreign investors. The only reservation is that foreign capital will have to respect whatever measures the USI adopts for the protection of the nation's workers. If Point 4 is enacted by Congress this session, Indonesia should be one of the leading beneficiaries. A loan from the Export-Import Bank is in prospect.

One year hence the USI is to hold elections and draw up a Constitution. Its first year is a critical one. And, in general, if native leadership does not combine effectively with foreign aid, this new nation will serve more as a temporary symbol of the sort of colonial liberation now fostered by the West than as a practical bar to the advance of Soviet imperialism. Moreover if this new regime should be forced to give way to separatism or to other impulsions toward chaos, the USI in its short life will indeed have served to stimulate other non-Caucasian colonial peoples; but it will not have achieved what the leaders of the exploited natives of the Dutch East Indies have long and rightly sought.

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Jews and Catholics

WHAT a few weeks ago appeared to be a difficult but not insoluble problem of trusteeship—the question of internationalizing Jerusalem or the Holy Places—has now become a situation loaded with danger for Catholic-Jewish relations. The question was whether the Moslem, Jewish and Christian shrines of the Jerusalem area were to be placed under international control, or all of Jerusalem internationalized, or the area left as last year's war had left it—with the Jews in control of the New City and the Arabs the Old.

In 1947 the United Nations General Assembly voted that Jerusalem should be internationalized. That was before the war in Israel. Now the General Assembly has reiterated that decision. It is a plan logical to argue, but it did not foresee the reaction of the Jews and Arabs.

The Israelis rejected the General Assembly decision and declared Jerusalem their political capital, as it has been their spiritual capital for centuries. King Abdullah was expected to act next, annexing to his kingdom that part of Jerusalem which he holds. The two are willing to defy the world's opinion as expressed in the UN.

Now there seems reason to believe that the Israelis and King Abdullah will come to their own terms on the division of Jerusalem, or that they will accept the compromise the UN is expected to work out, internationalizing only the shrines. It is likely that the matter will eventually be settled with only moderate damage to UN prestige.

What is most serious is that on this issue the Jews and the Catholics of the world have come to a grave bitterness. The UN plan was a result of the votes of the Soviet and Arab blocs, joined with a group of Catholic countries whose decisions were unquestionably influenced by the Pope's strong pleas for full internationalization of Jerusalem. Moshe Sharett, the Israeli foreign minister, characterized the Catholics' position as "the desire to seek revenge for an ancient sin and to settle an account of nineteen centuries' standing." That terrible charge is one Jewish reply to the Pope's position. Anti-semites among Catholics have their own counter-charges, and they are unquestionably pleased to have this issue to mask their sin.

The crime of anti-semitism is equal only to the bitterness it produces in reaction. That Moshe Sharett would interpret the Pope's political attempt to keep Jerusalem an international city as "revenge for an ancient sin" is a sign of the kind of Catholicism he and his fellow Jews have seen.

Léon Bloy, the French Catholic prophet of the last century, said: "I have once again wondered at the fact that the Jews are just as foolish, just as blind as the Christians. Here is a mysterious, all-embracing preparation for the cataclysms to come. Equally unable, both of them, to tell their friends from their foes, they are, all as one, 'bound with the same chain of darkness,' as it is written in the Book of Wisdom, in order to be enfolded in one unique and prodigious punishment."

"All-American" Cities

THE tag, "All-American," is far and away the greatest award that can come to a college player. It means all or most of these ingredients in happy combination: heft, speed, coordination, aggressiveness, finesse, stamina, quick-thinking, courage, good sportsmanship. It is no empty honor. It means a chance to build up a nice nest egg for a few years as a professional or a longer-term livelihood as a football coach. In any case, it is an award which opens all doors, and the "star" who cheerfully lays aside his armor upon graduation often has no trouble at all "winning his letter in life" as a salesman of some sort.

Seeing that the term means over-all playing excellence, the concept is not wholly applicable to the "All-American" cities chosen at the recent National Municipal League Conference at St. Paul. Philadelphia, Boston, Cleveland and the rest were chosen not for all-round soundness but for some spectacular play or shift. Nearly half of them, for instance, scored against local corruption or inefficiency by changing over from the mossback mayor and councilmen formation to a straight city manager alignment.

In a number of instances the honor came simply for having thrown the rascals out, be they Democratic or Republican. And the part that labor organizations played in some of these achievements is encouraging.

Pittsburgh should be one of the most popular choices, for the city fathers set in motion a series of smoke-control plays which have, among other things, brought 40 percent more sunlight into the city. Cleveland won its place on the team by tackling the problem of pollution—it has been the unhappy recipient of the sewage of fifty-nine communities farther upstream.

When the eleven is picked next year, at least, there might be a better basis for selection. Although there is every reason to cheer when local citizens finally rouse themselves to action on Election Day, their community is hardly in the same league with cities with a season-long record of good government, sound housing and public health policies, adequate educational and recreational facilities and active rank-and-file participation in local civic affairs. Some American cities might get the palm year after year, but why not in 1950 go the whole way with Walter Camp and choose the "team" on the basis of all-round excellence.

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Man, the Hunted

Totalitarian regimes must inevitably crush human reactions just because they are human.

Grigore Gafencu

THE purpose of this article is not to attack Communism as a whole, but merely to deal with Communism in action, as it shows itself today in the policies of the Soviet Union. It is not the ideas of Marx but the activity of Stalin that we will examine.

Actually, Russian Communism is today Communism itself; Moscow proclaims it, and all orthodox Communists recognize it. Between the theories and the prophesies of Marx (of which few have survived the passing of time), and the unquestionable reality of Stalin's power, a believing Communist has no right to hesitate.

Karl Marx had foreseen the necessity of a dictatorship in order to impose, by force, the economic and social transformations which he judged essential. But the idea, which he developed only once in his writing, did not attract him for he perceived its danger. The dictatorship that he foresaw was purely provisional.

This dictatorship, which Marx had merely suggested, Lenin actually created, and Stalin has established himself in it deliberately, powerfully and permanently. Apparently the revolutionary experience persuaded the Communist leaders that to overthrow institutions and change laws was not sufficient for the transformation of Man into the enlightened citizen, free from former prejudices, who would deserve, according to their belief, to live in freedom in the ideal Republic of the future.

From the revolutionary point of view, one of the principal reasons that seemed to justify the continuance of a dictatorship beyond the period foreseen by Marx and his disciples, was that it allowed the new régime time to control effectively the transformation of Man, to separate the sheep from the goats, and to re-educate the former—after liquidating the latter. For both operations, force was necessary; only a dictatorial régime could decide on and apply effective measures, could watch over the individual, sound his thoughts, spy out his acts, impose on him new truths, make of him the kind of man required, and pitilessly suppress all incorrigibles. Thus from its very inception the Communist régime engaged in a decisive struggle with *Man*.

But a new factor intervened which was to determine the relations between the revolutionary power and Man. This factor was fear.

The great Italian historian, Guglielmo Ferrero, has admirably described the great fear that seizes upon a dictatorship which knows itself to be contested and illegitimate. "Power is condemned to live in terror," wrote Ferrero, "because in order to govern, it uses violence and terror. Its subjects fear the arbitrary power which they must obey, while that power itself fears the subjects whom it commands. Cain fears Abel; that is why he ends by slaying him. Here is the explanation of the Holy Fear of dictatorship; it is merely the fear inherent in power, fear of the revolt of its subjects, a fear which from the very outset seizes upon *all* powers that are founded on force."

It is natural that such fear should have a particular hold on the Communist revolutionary government, since it has embarked on a vital struggle with Man, seeking to adapt him to its own ideas, to recreate him according to its own conception. On this struggle depends not only the success of Communism, but the very justification of revolution itself. The great fear of the Communist rulers before Man's reactions, physical but also moral and intellectual, drives them constantly to increase the constraint they exert, both on the material life and on the spirit of Man.

★

AS a result we see the holders of power shutting themselves up in fortresses like medieval barons (I know from experience that a triple cordon of police must be forced to penetrate into the Kremlin). We see that the mighty chiefs of the Communist dictatorship, whose portraits and busts are generously scattered throughout every country behind the Iron Curtain, when they are compelled to appear in flesh and blood, move furtively, like the guilty; that they travel in armed cars, driven at top speed; that they never move from city to city unless accompanied by their personal guards, by a vast array of detectives, an army of lackeys, and last but not

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least, by their own tried and trusted cooks. In fact, in this vast empire of fear, where the relations between the individual and his rulers have evolved into a silent but implacable war, that of Communism versus Man, the leaders of the revolution are at once the masters and the slaves of terror.

The war against Man has assumed under the Communist régime a specific character of unusual gravity. That it should be so is not, to tell the truth, entirely the fault of Communism; historical and geographical factors exist which must be taken into account. In Russia the government, whatever its nature, whether Czarist or Revolutionary, has always assumed a violent and arbitrary form, and Marx cannot be blamed if Holy Russia (which, like the good German that he was, he wished to see totally destroyed) has marked with its own ineradicable imprint the régime which aspires to impose Marxism on the world.

But there is another factor far more important, which explains why the Soviet régime is unlike all other revolutionary régimes.

It is much easier in our day to start a revolution than to end one; it is much easier to succumb by surprise to a dictatorship than to get rid of it. When a revolutionary and dictatorial régime, which can be assumed to be familiar with the technique of a coup d'etat, makes every effort to maintain itself in power and to defend itself by all the modern arms of which the State today disposes, it would be astounding if a revolt or a counter-revolution were ever to break out.

In its struggle against Man, the Communist dictatorship occupies a privileged position; it can use aggression as it pleases and can always take the offensive. Today those who have at their disposal a large number of tanks and machine guns need not take note of public opinion nor consider the limits of human suffering. They can move ahead indefinitely.

In this way, the revolution escapes from the people, and is no longer subject to the influence of the masses, of the nation. It becomes identified with authority, by which it is absorbed. *Authority then becomes an end in itself.* To remain in power against all and everything, to make of power the supreme, exclusive and permanent attribute of the party and its leaders, to sacrifice for this object *all* ideas and all men who become troublesome or superfluous, is the end to which a totalitarian régime naturally and inevitably tends today.

The struggle against Man in such a régime loses its revolutionary character; it soon ceases to be a question of doing violence to the individual with the object of correcting and improving him. The problem becomes one of keeping him in subjection just because he is a man, because his natural human reactions, unless they are crushed beforehand, might lead him to contest the legitimacy of the dictatorial power. This total rupture with Man seems to be the distinctive trait of the Communist power as it reveals itself in the Soviet State.

The prudent men in the Kremlin know how to elude the revenge of history. In order to live in safety they have organized scientifically—for today everything is scientific—a police state which is able to resist both the wear and tear of time, and the fury of mobs. This police state, that is to say the terror permanently established, with its seat in Moscow, has represented for more than thirty years the Communist Revolution, both within Russia and without. This is a fact which has triumphed over the prophecies of Karl Marx. Since the Revolution was not able to bring the terror to an end it is the terror which has conquered the Revolution.

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LET us now go to the heart of the matter and examine the weapons which Communism has chosen in its struggle with Man.

First of all there is the mighty political weapon which directs and decides the battle: the Party.

While the Communist State appears, like any bourgeois State, to be static and pacifically inclined, the Party represents action and continued strife. From this arises a duality in every Communist régime; on the one hand there is the State, which, using a familiar vocabulary, claims to apply the law and verbally guarantees individual rights and liberties as in the Soviet Constitution; on the other hand there is the Party, permanently mobilized for the defense of the revolution, obeying its own special laws and subject to its own special discipline and morality. The State seems to live in peace; the Party is always at war.

The first aim of the Party—an aim already achieved not only in Russia, but in the satellite countries—is to gain possession of the State, to become identified with it, to substitute itself for the State in the exercise of power. In fact the State, whose constitution is supposed to serve the community as a whole, becomes a mere outward shell.

The satellite nations are, as you have certainly heard since Moscow constantly reiterates it, entirely sovereign states. Even the full and absolute sovereignty of Albania has been emphatically asserted in the course of international debates. This may even be true. Why should not the satellite countries including Albania be sovereign? What we need to know is the meaning that can still be attached to the term State? In all the countries behind the iron curtain the Communist Party, seizing power, has substituted it-

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self for the State. Under these conditions what is the sovereignty of Albania worth? A satellite State may be sovereign, but its rulers are not. They obey the voice of a master. It is not the so-called sovereign which decides, but this foreign master.

The identification of State and Party has created in all countries under a Communist régime a class of Pariahs, which includes the greater part of the population. These people are exiles within the boundaries of their own country, for they stand outside the limits of the law. In the merciless war that Communism is waging on the human race they are the Communists' prisoners of war.

To emphasize the infamy of these prisoners the Party chooses certain of their number, usually the best known and most representative members of this desperate but still resisting humanity, to be brought before the law, not for the sake of judging them, since they are condemned beforehand, but in order to give publicity to their degradation and their punishment. We then see pass before these tribunals, which, like the State, keep the trappings and apparel of Justice, but which, also like the State, are hollow and empty of substance, the best citizens of each country.

★

MEN have long pictured Justice as a blind goddess with a bandage over her eyes as proof of her impartiality. We have seen her with scales in her hand and a sword at her side. Totalitarian jurisprudence has snatched the bandage from the goddess's eyes and thrown her sword upon the scales to weigh them down. A debased and mutilated Justice has herself entered the struggle against Man.

Andre Vishinsky, the eloquent Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, was yesterday a no less eloquent public prosecutor, and, thanks to his knowledge of the aims and methods of Soviet Justice, asked and obtained the condemnation of some of the most famous apostles of the revolution. The detailed account which he gives of this branch of Soviet science is therefore extremely valuable and deserves close examination. Here we need only note that the opinion of the eminent Soviet jurist as to the foundations of Justice differs widely from the proud old Latin saying: "Fiat Justitia, ruat caelum." (Let justice be done though the skies fall.)

Mr. Vishinsky's conception of Justice is less abstract and much more practical. According to him justice must be determined by the interests and aspirations of the community; it must guarantee the safety of the State, and lead society toward a better world. If we remember that in a totalitarian régime the State, the country, the world—and especially the Better World—mean simply the Party, we have a definition of a militant Justice, a mere fighting weapon, an instrument of domination, perfectly adapted to the needs of a dictator, whether Nazi, Fascist or Communist.

To the evil deeds of a justice so conceived must be added the methods used by the servants of the Party; the police, the secret services, the authorities responsible for investigation and inquiry, all the machinery of a power which acts in silence and darkness without legal or constitutional limits. From the mysterious agent so often referred to by Mr. Churchill, who knocks at his victim's door at night, enters his home, breaks every tie that binds him to life, and carries him away to some secret place for trial, to the subtle tormentors who pierce the depth of his soul, not to extract his secret, for which they care little, but to fill it with confusion and wring from him confessions needed for heaven knows what reason—all the enemies of Man are here, ready to fall upon their prey. The inquisitors, the servile bureaucrats, the terrified judges, the fanatical half-mad partisans, the sadistic executioners, all these necessary helpers of totalitarian justice are happy to act in secret. They have Man at their mercy, shut in between four walls, cut off from the world, so that they can dispose of him, and of the spark of humanity within him, at their will and pleasure.

The struggle that is now going on in many a secret cell to put out the light of the spirit and distort the conscience of Man is one of the most appalling facts of history. When the first strange confessions were produced at the famous Moscow trials of 1936 we scarcely dared to explore the mystery. Certain widely read books—I refer among others, to Koestler's *Darkness At Noon*—have tried to unveil the secret. Yet shivering at the tale, we still believed that such a work could only refer to an imaginary world. Since then, however, Soviet Russia has exported its methods of justice and has shared their benefits with all the countries behind the iron curtain.

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I MUST point out another weapon, the most dangerous of all, which Communism once in power uses in its struggle with Man; it is falsehood imposed as official truth. Lies, spread by the most insinuating and persuasive propaganda, are supposed not only to guide but to fashion the whole life of a nation. Their initial object was gradually to prepare the people for the coming of a new and better world, but as the revolution has altered in character their object has become merely to guarantee to the Party its tenure of power.

Lies penetrate into the past and remake his-

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tory according to party needs. For instance, Bolshevik history retains only the names of the leaders who have remained in power, *the others are erased from the records*. Lies seize on youth at the earliest age, so that it may learn only what it should know to be a docile instrument in the hands of authority. Lies enter into the domain of art to drive out inspiration and free creation. Lies direct science toward ends useful to the rulers, while suppressing all freedom of research, criticism and thought.

Man, hunted down on all sides, could still hope to escape the investigations of Communist justice by living hidden without rights or freedom, aloof from politics. But can he escape the constant threat of the all-invading lie? He cannot find refuge in the past, for history has been confiscated by the Party; he cannot find consolation in the arts, for Communist sculpture offers him only busts of Stalin; and Communist poetry, after driving out of its temple the "cosmopolites," the "individualists," and "spiritualists," the "idealists," spends its time in glorifying the life of the Kolkoze. He cannot enlarge his knowledge or learn what is going on in the world without hearing daily, at every hour, the voice of his newspaper or his radio repeating that: "While in the capitalist country the economic situation is deteriorating from day to day . . . in the countries of Peoples' Democracy, on the contrary, we observe a powerful upsurge in all branches of national economy alongside with great progress in the cultural and material welfare of the population." (I quote this passage from the latest speech of Mr. Vishinsky in the United Nations.)

Man living behind the iron curtain, half crushed by the wretchedness of his life, knows well that none of this is true. He also knows, which increases his confusion and his sense of degradation, that he is not even *expected* to believe it. All that is required is that he should *pretend* to believe, above all, that he should never allow the least doubt to appear. Otherwise he will be considered as a delinquent and a traitor.

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WE have seen how Communism in power has declared war on Man, we have seen its arms and methods of warfare. Let us now enter the camp of the victims. There, in spite of the harshness of a régime that tries to standardize the world, there is still wide diversity, each country lives out its own drama, each man suffers after his own fashion. Yet it is, alas! easy to group these sufferings into a single whole, for when he is injured in the depth of his being Man, whoever he may be, Polish or Bulgarian, Hungarian, Serb or Rumanian, feels the same distress. Today this human distress exists only behind the iron curtain, but since it is the natural human reaction to conditions that may extend and become general, it has a universal character.

Here are fragments of letters that have managed to pass through cracks in the iron curtain, and which friends have passed on to me.

"Since our last message our boundaries have grown narrower and narrower. One category of citizens after another has been struck down and destroyed. After attacking industry, commerce and middle-sized rural property the régime is now persecuting peasant proprietors. It is not alone the social function but the man himself, his friends, his family, his faith and his past, that are threatened. Whole groups are considered guilty, and must expiate the crime of having been born, of having lived contrary to the so-called thought of Marx. Their means of existence are cut off, and they end in abject poverty or in prison. Beyond the prison doors reign silence and mystery. No one knows what goes on there. When prisoners die their bodies are dissected and burned, and the family is not even notified." (The names of several well-known men who have disappeared in this way follow): "But why repeat all this? No one abroad will believe what we say, people think that we invent or at least exaggerate. Alas!"

"I write with a sense of dread," says a man known for his courage, "for it seems to me that I am spied on even through the walls. These few words will give you the measure of our humiliation. We have all become unrecognizable. In every family someone is imprisoned or on trial. Consequently our conversation is a series of impotent laments. We look like ghosts, after sleepless nights and interminable days."

Another writer expresses his bitter rebellion.

"Do you know, Monsieur, that we are living in a vast concentration camp, in a perpetual lie? Do you know that we have to lie to keep our jobs, to be allowed to study, to send our children to school? And what schools! Most monstrous of all we have to teach our children to lie, so that they may themselves prove that they are in the Party line. We must lie all the time, so much so that we feel a kind of second personality growing up within us, of whom we may never be rid."

Here we touch the high point of the tragedy. More than the material misery which has fallen on the rich and on the poor, on the disappointed workman and peasant, on the dispossessed owner, more even than the terror, the constant threat of imprisonment which hangs over the whole people, the struggle between Communism and Man is characterized by the struggle within the human being, which threatens to degrade and destroy his soul.

"Spring will never come again," writes a young woman. "A gray day dawns like all the others. We walk, we talk, we try not to think. Absurd words such as 'class struggle,' 'Communist Party,' 'vanguard of the proletariat,' and so on, sound

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in our ears and follow us everywhere. At night we go to bed exhausted and lie rigid, re-living the humiliations we have endured. In those long hours of total solitude no solution seems possible. We no longer know what is true. Truth, once so clear and obvious, has become inconceivable."

Here is a last quotation:

"The churches are still open, but for how long? On Sundays and festivals thousands of Christians gather in them and never have they shown greater fervor. Many, kneeling, hide their faces in their hands to weep. We have just heard that in order to put an end to religious practices the State will impose a tax of 9,000 lei on a baptism and 25,000 lei on a religious marriage. That means that no one will be able to be baptised or married in church, for no worker ever commands such sums. All that is left is the service for the dead which is still very cheap. It is our only consolation."

Christian Trade Unions

The Catholic and non-Catholic European Union movements must learn to live together or die separately.

George G. Higgins

IT HAS become a commonplace to say that history, in this the atomic age, is being made more rapidly than ever before. Revolutionary social, political and economic changes—good, bad, and indifferent—are occurring at a pace which would have been thought impossible by our grandfathers.

Witness the profound change taking place in the ranks of organized labor on the Continent of Europe. For several generations the trade union movement throughout almost all of Western Europe (Great Britain being the most notable exception) has been sharply and sometimes fanatically divided along religious and ideological lines, with Catholics and some Protestants belonging to non-denominational Christian trade unions (and in a few cases to separate Catholic and Protestant unions) partially as a protest against the Marxist and anti-religious approach of the established and more powerful Socialist unions. The so-called "neutral" union, such as we know it in the United States, has never existed on the Continent.

Currently, however, the situation in Europe is changing very rapidly—so rapidly that it is next to impossible for the American observer, at a distance of several thousand miles, to keep up with developments. In general, however, it would probably be safe to say that the trade unions of Europe have already entered upon a new era which will be characterized by a cooperative relationship between Catholics and Socialists (and between Christian and Socialist unions) such as few observers on either side of the Atlantic would have been bold enough to predict even as recently as a year or two ago.

This is not to say that the two groups have ironed out all of their many differences. They are not yet living in an atmosphere of sweetness and light. Quite the contrary. They still disagree very radically on a number of basic issues which to superficial American observers may seem to be much ado about nothing but which to Europeans, against the background of a profoundly different heritage, are very real and very important. They still suspect one another, and the Socialist unions, for their part, demonstrated recently at the London meeting of the new international Federation of Free Trade Unions that they are still capable of trying to take unfair advantage of the Christian unions in the clinches.

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THE Socialist unions, it will be recalled, reverted to type at London and tried their best to keep the Christian unions out of the new world federation, thereby, incidentally, walking out on what were thought to be air-tight agreements previously arrived at in preliminary sessions of the planning committee. Fortunately, however, a "compromise" formula was finally adopted making it possible for the Christian unions of the several European countries to join the new federation if they would agree to disaffiliate from the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions within a period of two years. From the point of view of the Christian unions, this was obviously a very unacceptable compromise. It really wasn't a compromise at all. It was a distasteful ultimatum—distasteful to many of the American delegates, incidentally, as well as to the Christian unions. Nevertheless it was better than the original position of the Socialists, who were

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obviously all set to have things their own way. At the present writing it would seem very probable that at least a few of the Christian unions will accept the compromise and take out formal membership in the new federation. Others are likely to follow suit, however reluctantly, within the next few months. Surely there were few students of the problem who could have foreseen this dvelopment and few who would have been prepared to admit, or even to hope, that it was possible at this time.

It can be argued, then, that we are even now witnessing the decline of the Christian trade union movement as such in favor of a program of closer cooperation between Catholics and non-Communist Socialists (some of whom are Socialists only in name today) in so-called "neutral" unions. Already in Germany, Austria and Italy the day of the Christian trade unions, for reasons too varied and too complicated to enumerate at present, is pretty well over with—barring unforeseen developments. Slowly and painfully Catholics and Socialists in the labor movements of these three countries are learning to agree to disagree, and to work together, however suspiciously at first, on their common economic and social problems. It will not be easy for either group to forgive and forget the recriminations of the past few generations, but certainly there is much to be said in favor of their making the effort.

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ALMOST everything that we would care to say on the subject of Catholic-Socialist cooperation was recently well said by James Loeb, executive Secretary of Americans for Democratic Action in an article entitled, "The Non-Communist Left," in the October 14th issue of THE COMMONWEAL. Mr. Loeb, a non-Catholic liberal who spent the Summer in Europe discussing this all-important problem with his European contacts, pleads in this article for cooperation between the Catholic progressives and the non-Communist Socialists of Europe. His reason for going to the trouble of writing a public appeal for such cooperation is his firm conviction that "to the extent that the Left Catholics and the Socialists remain divided, either Communism or some form of neo-Fascism will succeed in uniting them in concentration camps." The present writer is inclined to share this conviction.

We hasten to add that Loeb probably doesn't fully realize the seriousness of the philosophical or ideological cleavage between Catholics and doctrinaire Socialists, especially on such central issues as the school question. He wants to understand it, but it would seem to be fair to say that he has yet to sound the depths of the problem.

Nevertheless the present writer, for his part, wishes him well in his efforts to persuade the Catholic and non-Catholic progressives of Europe to come closer together, whenever and wherever possible, if only, as he suggests, to forestall their common destruction. It's worth the effort.

We ourselves have definite, first-hand proof that the majority of the members of the former Christian trade unions in Germany, Austria and Italy—to mention only these by name—are sincerely making this effort. Their very decision not to try to reorganize their Christian unions is evidence of an almost heroic willingness to go more than half way in cooperating with the Socialists. They know that there are serious obstacles to be overcome before they can hope to arrive at our type of "neutrality" in their trade union movements. But they are prepared to make the experiment honestly and in good faith. They look upon trade union unity, not as an unhappy necessity to be endured as stoically as possible, but rather as a challenge to be taken up with Christian zeal.

Recently the Munich Catholic Social Week adopted a strong resolution advocating active Catholic participation in the post-war "neutral" trade unions of Germany, as long as these unions continue to maintain political and religious neutrality.

This is another evidence—and there are many more in Germany, Austria, Italy and some of the other countries of Europe—that Catholic workers want trade union unity and are willing to swallow their legitimate pride of organization to bring it into being.

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AS WE offer these predictions about the future relationship between Catholics and Socialists, we hope that it will be understood that we are not in any way belittling the contribution which the Christian trade unions of Europe have made during the past two or three generations. We would not wish to be understood as underestimating by so much as an iota the seriousness of the religious and ideological issues which divided European labor during this unhappy period. Above all else, we would not wish to be interpreted as sitting in judgment on our fellow-Catholics and fellow-Christians of all denominations on the Continent. They know their own problems better than we do, and they would have every right to be resentful of a type of American cultural imperialism which would try to impose upon them, even indirectly, the American pattern of unionism, itself anything but perfect.

All that we are suggesting is that in our opinion and in the opinion of many Europeans with whom we discussed the matter this summer, the gradual establishment of "neutral" trade unionism, at least in some of the countries of Europe, is both feasible (as recent events have demonstrated) and desirable. We would also suggest that a neu-

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tral trade union movement might be the best of all possible schools of democracy in some of the embattled countries of Europe. The case of Germany comes to mind immediately. Neutral trade unionism might be the last best hope of teaching Europeans to cooperate more closely with one another in the temporal order in spite of the deep ideological differences which unfortunately still divide them on the essentials of life. In any event —other things being equal—it would seem reasonable to suppose that the Catholics of Europe have more to gain than to lose by adopting a missionary approach of social reconstruction, if, as, and when such an approach is feasible.

We are thinking in this connection of a conversation we had last summer with a prominent Catholic leader in Germany. We asked him if he was happy about the fact that the Christian trade unions of pre-Hitler days had not been revived at the end of hostilities. Reluctantly at first, but then very openly and almost enthusiastically, he answered: "All things considered, I am happy about the turn of events. The Christian trade unions were good unions, and they made a great contribution to the life of Germany. But in their absence we are now challenged to concentrate more than ever before upon the training of all of our workers so that they may carry the social message of the Church into the ranks of their fellow-workers of all religions and none." He wasn't certain that the experiment would work successfully, for he wasn't certain—and nobody else is certain either—that Christians and Socialists will be able to forget the past sufficiently to cooperate with one another sincerely and in good faith. In general, however, he was optimistic about the future. His point of view could be summarized in the following "presuppositions of labor unity" made public about a year ago by a Special Committee of Germany's Christian Democratic Union Party:

> The foremost presupposition will always be an absolute political and religious neutrality on the part of the unions; that is to say, unions shall not be affiliated either to parties or churches. Any . . . dependence upon a party or religious body must be rejected.
>
> Nevertheless the political formative powers as organized in the parties and the religious movements, as represented by the churches, shall be fully respected and acknowledged in their own right (in their creative value for state and society).
>
> Within the unions such double-edged neutrality calls for full equality of all members and for the rejection of all . . . discrimination in favor of any single group.

If these conditions are sincerely observed by all parties concerned in Germany, Austria and Italy, there is every reason to hope that "neutral" trade unionism will survive and flourish within their borders. The example of such cooperation is bound to have a salutary influence upon the rest of Europe. But even if neutral trade unionism were impossible as of this moment in any or all of the nations of Europe, it would still seem to be true that all of the Christian trade unions, as presently constituted, have much to contribute to he new International Federation of Free Trade Unions. The present writer, for one, hopes that they will find it possible to join the new organization and participate actively in its affairs. We might add that the AFL and the CIO would be exceedingly happy to have them as partners in this most recent and most hopeful attempt to establish international labor coöperation.

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CONTINENTAL Socialists, and their friends in the U. S., ought to lean over backwards to avoid offending the religious convictions of Catholic workers. The doctrinaire Socialist who at this late date insists on clinging to his traditional superstitions about religion in general and about the Catholic Church in particular, long after he has abandoned the rest of his Marxism, is a menace to the peace and prosperity of Europe. An anti-clerical, anti-religious Socialist is a man with suicidal tendencies, for to the extent that he makes it impossible for Christian trade unionists to cooperate with him in the labor movement, to that extent he is guaranteeing the collapse of democracy in Europe and the victory of totalitarianism. To repeat the warning of James Loeb, "to the extent that the Left Catholics and the Socialists remain divided, either Communism or some form of neo-fascism will succeed in uniting them in concentration camps."

By the same token, the leaders of the Christian trade union movement will also have to be willing to compromise when honest compromise seems to be required by the facts—more willing, probably, than they have sometimes been in the past. Doctrinaires are not necessarily Socialists.

All in all, however, we would take it that the burden of proof of sincerity now lies more heavily upon the Socialists than it does upon the leaders of the Christian unions. Christian trade unionists have already gone to heroic lengths in at least three countries to demonstrate their sincerity. The London Conference of the IFFTU called for an additional sacrifice of legitimate organizational pride. Are the Socialists now willing to reciprocate, or do they want to have their cake and eat it too? If they want the latter, they can probably have it, but they will soon find that their cake has turned to ashes in their mouths and that totalitarianism has put them on a permanent diet of bread and water.

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The Stage

The Velvet Glove

ROSEMARY CASEY'S comedy is completely charming and I think its production, in the hands of Guthrie McClintic, marks a high point in imaginative and clever casting. Miss Casey's fable is honestly no fable at all. She is depicting the trials of the Mother Superior of a teaching order of Catholic nuns, who finds herself in conflict with a prejudiced Bishop, a large Banker, and several parents. This hero (I don't know why it seems more suitable and right to say hero rather than heroine), is also determinedly in support of the Sacrament of Matrimony, the sense of charity, the sense of justice, and of the plain fact that the world *is*. She is a hero indeed, and how she wins intellectual freedom for her school, plus the happiness of a pair of young people, makes up Miss Casey's play.

Mr. McClintic has cast Grace George in the lead, a circumstance which must, I think, provide a theatre occasion right round the block. Miss George in a wimple is neither more nor less than ever she was—the most sensitive, graceful, amusing and amused of actresses; the coolest, the carefullest and (I think this is primary), the clearest. Diction like hers is simply no longer heard on our stage, and I think it is fine to find it delivering realities rather than fiction. The work of Walter Hampden and Jean Dixon in the several rôles of a Monsignor and a Dean is as seriously planned, and I want only to add that Donald Oenslager's single convent setting looked as exact and tidy as possible. (*at the Booth*)

How Long Till Summer

HERE is a poor, poor play, although one based on a theme which is paramount. Sarett and Herbert Rudley are presenting the Negro question all done up in a lickity-split setting by Ralph Alswang, plus the endearing and skilled attentions of such players as Frank Wilson, Josh White, and Josh White, Jr. I take the authors' point to be that corruption (naturally, political corruption) is more immediately damaging to the American Negro's cause than is the southern rope.

We are confronted with a New York (Harlem) man who, having established a family and housed them in dignity, feels himself constrained to truckle to the local white Boss in order to maintain his own private *status quo*. This is enough timber—and enough fact—to build a play certainly, but the authors have messed it up with the terrible facts of a Negro child's awakening to the present democratic scheme. The piece literally goes around corners, and it is set so. On one side of the stage, we have an inept and psychologically silly rendition of "Christopher Blake," detailing a child's nightmares. And on the other, we have a man fighting his wife and his best friend in a good deal of prose and small sense. Quite honestly, there is no describing such confusion. I did not know where I was on Wednesday night at the Playhouse, and I still do not know. It seems to me that the only conclusion to be drawn from such a sincere and misguided shambles will be that the failure of drama criticism in this country is more than obvious; it is plainly suicidal. (*at the Playhouse*)

The Rat Race

GARSON KANIN'S latest effort— a New York story of starving Boy meeting starving Girl—is plainly mistaken. Mr. Kanin, as author and director, goes down in interest before his designer, Donald Oenslager again, whose setting of a Manhattan street and a Manhattan rooming house, is completely and authentically breathtaking. It seemed to me that every once in a while Betty Field and Barry Nelson in the leads, and my most esteemed Doro Merande in support, won over Mr. Oenslager's marvelous engineering.

But not for long. It becomes clear that the 19th century dictum of *drama as action* has now come round full circle. We have now got the active scene—the movied play—on every hand, and it is honestly true that as long as the scene changes, no dramatist need write nor wright nor dream nor deck *people* for us at all. I expect the last step will be simply a loudspeaker in front of a continuous panorama. That will be the day when the Broadway theatre becomes, finally and forever, a travel bureau for nowhere. (*at the Ethel Barrymore*)

Caesar and Cleopatra

ASTONISHINGLY and excellently, Cedric Hardwicke's version of the Shavian classic rivals the motion picture. As a matter of fact, I thought it even more nicely colored. Rolf Gerard's costumes are stunning, and his handling of the vast Egyptian skies, somehow or other, lends comment to the human story. In point of casting, Lilli Palmer is apparently the master's choice, and she is very, very good indeed. And very attractive. Furthermore, there are Ralph Forbes as a sturdy Rufio, Arthur Treacher as a designedly funny Britannus, and Bertha Belmore as a terrifying Ftatateeta. Sir Cedric's Caesar was a little harder to estimate since he had been ill with laryngitis—so seriously that the opening was delayed. Due to this misfortune I was not able clearly to judge his delivery of the long, long speeches. But his presence seemed to me fine: humorous enough, reserved enough, eminently sensible. As everyone knows, the business was written in 1898 and was devised to entertain. I may say the proposition still holds good. (*at the National*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

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The Screen

After Zither What?

IF anyone thinks, because of the sad stories we are hearing about the financial state of the English film industry, that English films themselves are going to pot, he is greatly mistaken. These three new imports from the British Isles show that the English can still make good films. They may not be *your* dish of tea, but they deserve more than passing attention.

"The Third Man" deserves *much* more than passing attention. In fact if you like a well-made movie, this is one for which you should drop everything and run to see. Producer-director Carol Reed has taken another Graham Greene story (this happy combination again) and fashioned it into a thrilling example of cinema that will hold you fascinated long after you leave the theater.

In post-war Vienna, where there are four military zones and where everyone seems to be mixed up in some racket or black market, a visiting American writer (Joseph Cotten) finds himself dragged into a sinister drama. He comes to see a man, but arrives just in time for his funeral. The man's girl friend (Valli) tells him to leave. A British commanding officer (Trevor Howard) practically orders him to go. But no; the American hangs around, soon discovers there's something fishy about his friend's death, and then gets involved in the most complicated goings-on that a well-ordered film has ever had to untangle. And in a performance that is the best he has ever given on the screen, Orson Welles portrays the guy at the bottom of all these mysterious machinations. It would be utterly unfair to reveal any more of the story, but anyway it is not only story that makes this such a fine film. Its characterization, its atmosphere and its display of Vienna itself will fascinate you as much as the plot. And so will the film's music which consists solely of zither music. Anton Karas plays this zither; and if the movie's good cast or plot or suspense or mood don't get you, the zither will.

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"TIGHT Little Island" is one of those minor gems the English turn out every now and then. For its brilliant satire it may remind you of "I Know Where I'm Going," "Saints and Sinners" or "Passport to Pimlico" but it stands well on its own feet and its story and fun are distinctive in their own way. Based on Compton Mackenzie's novel "Whiskey Galore," it tells about a group of Scotch people on a tiny Hebrides Island. Glum and dour are these Scots because the war is on and they haven't had any whisky for some time and there's no sign of any coming. Furthermore they are saddled with a stuffy Englishman as commander of the Home Guard. Well, then—just as if it were an answer to this grim situation, a ship founders off the island's rocky coast. And the cargo on the sinking ship is fifty thousand cases of whiskey! The men go to work (after respectfully waiting until the Sabbath is over), but the hitch in their plans as they smack their lips is this Home Guard officer who calls in the customs and excise agents. What happens then is about as amusing as anything we have on our screens today; in fact the whole film is a delight —thanks mainly to Michael Balcon's fine production and Alexander Mackendrick's wise direction. The script and performances are excellent—from Basil Radford as the Englishman who typifies himself best with his own indignant statement: "We play the game for the sake of the game; others play to win," right down the line to the large group of extras who are properly glum, dour and tight. You'll find Joan Greenwood and several other young folk quite charming as they carry on the film's various romances. You'll probably also find that "Tight Little Island" will make you desperately thirsty; but the fun, like well-salted nuts, is worth the thirst.

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WHAT *"Give Us This Day"* needs is some of the humor and warmth from these other two films. It is an exceedingly long and gloomy movie that stresses the material side of life so strenuously that it loses sight of any spiritual values. It is strange that the English would have chosen Pietro Di Donato's "Christ In Concrete" to make into a film. The setting is Brooklyn of the 1920s, and the story is about an Italian bricklayer (Sam Wanamaker) and his wife (Lea Padovani) who just never get enough money to get ahead, to feel secure, to buy that house they always plan for. This is a much more serious film than "A Tree Grows In Brooklyn," but it lacks that movie's heart; and like that picture which was also supposed to be about Catholics, its characters are not Catholic in behavior or thought. The sad family in "Give Us This Day" gets sadder and sadder as they are engulfed in the big Depression. The bricklayer finally turns to an old girl friend (Kathleen Ryan) for consolation and he lets his friends down by becoming foreman on a job that lacks safety regulations. He gets a change of heart on both these scores before he is killed in one of the most grueling death scenes that the movies have shown. The cast have handled their rôles well, especially Miss Padovani whose portrayal of the struggling, beaten wife is tremendously moving. Only occasionally do English accents seem out of place in this film's Brooklyn which is actually more theatrical than real anyway. No doubt Producers Rod E. Geiger and N. A. Bronsten are on the side of the hard-hit little man, and no doubt Director Edward Dmytryk meant to portray his plight honestly; but a heavy film of this length and intensity has to do more than propose such questions about life as: "What does it mean? That only the strong survive?"

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Catholic International *News*

Catholic Labor in Quebec

In an article entitled "Labor and the Church in Quebec," published in the January issue of Foreign Affairs (58 *East 68th St., New York 21, N. Y.*) *Blair Fraser tells of some recent developments within the Catholic Syndicate movement.*

THE 376 Syndicates in Quebec and their 82,000 members are organized into the Canadian Confederation of Catholic Labor, and until 1945 the presidency of the Confederation was held by an ardent Duplessis man, a very docile unionist. [Maurice Duplessis, extreme Rightist, is the provincial Premier of Quebec.] That year his own secretary, Gerard Picard, led a successful revolt and defeated him with a platform of militant action. The Syndicates have functioned as real, aggressive trade unions ever since.

Instead of regarding CIO and AFL unions as enemies to be hated, the Syndicates treat them as allies. There is close and often successful cooperation between the Catholic and the international federations. Syndicate ranks have been opened to workers of all faiths. The accent has shifted from the word "Catholic" to the word "labor."

This change on the lay side was a major victory for a kindred faction within the ranks of the clergy. A small but growing minority of Catholic priests had long felt that the Church in Quebec interested itself too little and too late in social questions. They recalled the words of Pius XI: "The great scandal of the nineteenth century was that the Church lost the working class." They believed the Church must regain that support by taking its place at the workingman's side. Beside him, not in front of him.

These clerics are anticlerics of a kind; they oppose and denounce the excessive domination of all activities by the clergy which has been so common in Quebec since the days of New France.

In a pamphlet a few years ago the Very Reverend P.M. Gaudrault, Provincial of the Dominican Order in Quebec, spoke out against this ultra-clericalism with astonishing frankness:

> First it wearies a good many Catholics, many more than is supposed, who in their own secular domain feel themselves encircled, in tutelage, treated like minors. They want air . . .
>
> Second it exasperates those other Catholics who are already too much inclined to criticize the Church and the clergy. Unhappily the number of such Catholics is growing continually. . . . .
>
> Some time ago a Catholic of good education, a man whose work takes him among all ranks of society, said to me, "Father, you don't hear what's being said everywhere, what's cooking in the pot. But people talk freely before me, and the clergy would be frightened if they could hear the talk of some reputedly good Catholics. And this is true from top to bottom society."

The minority of priests and thinking laymen who share these views have been working for years to change the Quebec picture. Laval University's School of Social Sciences, headed by the Dominican Father Georges-Henri Levesque, has been a disseminating center of liberal thought and action within the Catholic Church. Its graduates and men whom it has influenced are active in the labor movement, the useful cooperative movement, and in other progressive French-Canadian organizations.

Catholic Unions and Franco

David C. Williams, correspondent in Britain for The New Leader (7 *East 15th St., New York 3, N. Y.*) *reports on the final days of the first Conference of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, recently held in London:*

A RINGING declaration against any appeasement of Franco Spain was the highlight of the closing days . . . The delegates were alarmed by reports that friends of Franco in Washington mean to press Congress in January to provide him with economic and military assistance. On this issue the delegates were united, whatever their nationality, religious and ideological divisions on other matters.

Irving Brown for the AFL, Allan Haywood for the CIO, Arthur Deakin for the British TUC, and Léon Jouhaux for the Force Ouvrière of France, threw the entire weight of their organizations behind the resolution condemning Franco. Widely welcomed was the strong declaration of Giulio Pastore, Catholic head of the free trade union movement of Italy, who said that Italian workers, who had suffered under Mussolini, had the best of reasons to oppose dictatorship in Spain.

Gaston Tessier, grand old man of the Catholic trade union movement, which is strong in several Western European countries, and head both of the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions and its French affiliate, was equally forthright. In an interview granted to me, he stated:

"Since its foundation in 1919, our Confederation has always maintained an implacable opposition to all forms of dictatorship, whether those of Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, or Franco. Therefore we cannot favor friendly relations with any government in Spain which is not truly democratic and does not guarantee to trade unions full freedom of organization."

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Of Note

The Vocation of Martha

IN THE Christmas issue of *The Harvester,* organ of students and alumni of Saint Edward's Seminary, Kenmore, Washington; Richard Walsh discusses Saint Augustine's interpretation of the new Testament story of Martha and Mary, relating it to the vocation of the housewife and those nuns who devote themselves to the domestic work of seminaries, schools and convents. He alludes to the ordinary, non-Augustinian explanation of the story: that Mary represents the contemplative life and Martha the less perfect active life, and then he continues:

> Saint Augustine sees in this story of Martha and Mary a much more fundamental, and a much deeper meaning than often presented itself to the eyes of another tradition. And it is through the eyes, then, of the great Saint Augustine that the "dignity of work" ceases to be a hackneyed phrase, and begins to take on a meaning proper to its place in God's creation.
>
> So if through the eyes of Saint Augustine this incident as described in Saint Luke's Gospel is scrutinised closely, there will be seen in it a great mystery. And the mystery is the mystery of God's mercy and love working and growing in Martha as she performs her daily tasks; while at the same time, in Mary can be seen the completion of God's love and mercy, which is the ultimate possession of God through love.
>
> For to the mind of St. Augustine these two holy women are symbols not merely of the contemplative and active lives, but of two other lives: namely the present life and the future life. "In Martha there is the image of the present life, in Mary the future: What Martha was doing, we are not occupied in doing, what Mary was doing, we hope to be doing." But in the meantime, while we wait for the perfection of Charity, we must occupy ourselves with the necessary labors of the day. And in so doing, we, like Martha, while serving our fellow men, are truly serving our Lord.
>
> Thus, the balance between prayer and work has been upset more by the lack of a positive notion of Christian labor, than by the insistence on a division of Christian works. But even beyond this, there has been lost the greater mystery of man continuing God's original creation of the ". . . dry land, called earth: and of the fruits that earth yield: grasses that grow and seed: fruit-trees too, each giving fruit of its own kind. (Here St. Augustine exclaims: And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good.) But how much better is he whom God made than all these?" St. Augustine asks. "And then God said, let us make man, to our image and likeness . . . So God made man in his own image, made him in the image of God. Man and woman both he made them."
>
> And if man is above all the rest of creation, how much more exalted are the works which center around the needs of man. Further, for the woman of today, this concept of working with God in order to serve her own needs and those of her fellow men has a greater and deeper meaning in and through Christ.
>
> . . . Works of mercy are not the extraordinary labors of heroic souls, but the ordinary works of every Christian soul. As St. Paul says: "In eating, in drinking, in all that you do, do everything as for God's glory." The problem then that remains for the priest to solve, if the Christian notions of work and prayer are to be again integrated, is that of restoring in Catholic homes the idea of the sacramentality of the everyday tasks of Christian women.

The English-Speaking World Pagan?

THE editor of *Blackfriars* (St. Giles, Oxford, England) writes in his latest issue of that fundamental realization that France was a mission country which produced France's modern apostolic movement. English Catholics, he says, assume that their country is Christian, that their apostolic efforts should take for granted that all have heard the gospel. Insisting that this assumption is false, he continues:

> It has been estimated that only seven million people in England practice any form of Christianity. Of these some two or three millions are Catholic and another two are Anglican, and the rest presumably nonconformist. If this is true, and it must approximate to the facts to judge by the ordinary experience of everyday life, it means that there must be nearly forty million people who are in fact practicing pagans. Only one in every six people has sufficient faith in the gospel of Christ to do anything positive about it. And the rest? . . . Of course the degrees of indifference, of antagonism to Christianity, of positive acceptance of pagan standards are infinitely varied, but they make up between them a great people who know not Christ, a people to whom the gospel is not preached. Many of them, if not most, are indifferent and apathetic but we cannot condemn them for that unless they have had the chance of being enkindled by the fire of God's love and by the realization that Christ is risen. If they have spurned the true Christ and not merely a false impersonation of him then the responsibility does lie with them; but until that happens the responsibility for their well-being rests with the Catholics all of whom have a mission to preach the gospel in some form or another.
>
> It is at least arguable that if Catholics in the English-speaking world adopted this truly mission-

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ary attitude the problem of the 'leakage' would solve itself. Instead of clinging desperately to what they have they would look upon the whole world as theirs. . . . The means will become clear when the nature of the mission has been accepted. So long as we are ready to treat the Church as static we shall rely a great deal on Catholic clubs and various institutions designed to keep Catholics together and away from the pagan world in which they live. But then we should be fighting a losing battle. If we turn round to recognise the mission *ad extra,* to see the teeming millions who are asking to have the Word of God put before them, asking by the sheer fact of their ignorance and discomfort, we shall find that ways and means spring to hand, not necessarily the way of preaching by word of mouth from the height of a soap box, but certainly by some form of intensive prayer and liturgical life, of reaching out to all kinds of action.

Memories of Henry James

Compton Mackenzie

IT is a fine May morning in the year 1890, and I am walking with my father down the Broad Walk in Kensington Gardens on the way to call upon Mr. Henry James who, my father has just informed me impressively, is a great novelist.

"When I was a year or two older than you are now," he went on, "your Uncle Henry and I were walking with your grandfather in Kensington Gardens when we met a friend of his, a tall gentleman who, before he went on, took out a red purse and divided the money in it between us two boys. That was Mr. Thackeray, and he was a very great novelist." I began to be interested in great novelists.

We passed the balloon-woman by the gate of the Broad Walk and crossed the road into De Vere Gardens, where Henry James lived in a house about half-way along on the left-hand side. At that date he had a fairly full dark-brown beard and I recall a slight restless anxiety in his manner. He may have been embarrassed by the presence of a small boy. The purpose of my father's visit was to discuss a dramatization James was making of his own book *The American.* While my seniors were gravely talking I looked round the room, much interested by the variety of the great novelist's accommodations for his work. On the right of the window was a desk at which he could write standing. Along the wall on the left, there was a day bed with a swivel-desk attached, on which he could write lying. In front of the window was a large kneehole desk at which he could write sitting. Observing my eyes wandering round these engines of his craft, Henry James explained to me with elaborate courtesy their purposes. Then I brought out my birthday-book. I was an old hand at this business of asking people to write their names on the date they were born. The first inscription in that birthday-book was made in Chester in the year 1886 by Judge Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's School Days.* To his name, in the space for his birthday on April 15, James added the date on which he wrote it—May 5, 1890. And then we took our leave. Alas, no red purse was emptied into my hand, and I decided that great novelists were unreliable folk.

*

THAT autumn Henry James went up to Sheffield, where my father, Edward Compton, was playing his annual week of Old English comedies at the Theatre Royal, in order to read his play to the company. James sat on the stage with his back to the empty auditorium, and by the illumination of the two gas-jets in what used to be called a T-light, he read *The American* to the company sitting round in a semi-circle. Another famous novelist was in that semi-circle, for A. E. W. Mason was then a young man in the Compton Comedy Company. The reading began at ten and continued till after three. When it was over my father called on the author to take a quick walk before they went back to dinner at four o'clock.

"Well?" said James anxiously as they walked along, "what . . . er . . . what is your . . . er . . . first immediate impression, my dear Compton?"

"The play's too long," said my father.

"Too long?" the playwright postulant gasped. Then he stopped to hold my father's arm in an almost agonized appeal. "Too long?" he repeated in bewilderment. "Did I understand you to say it was too long?"

"Much too long," he was told. "It took you well over five hours to read it to the company. Add the intervals to that, and if the curtain went up at half-past seven it would be one o'clock in the morning before it came down on the last act."

"But what . . . what shall we, as they say, do about it?" the playwright asked, dazed by so unexpected a criticism.

"We must cut it," my father said.

Henry James pressed a hand to his heart. "Cut it?" he quavered. "Did I . . . did you, my dear Compton, say 'cut it?' "

"By at least two hours," my father replied firmly.

"But who will perform this ruthless . . . this . . . monstrous piece of surgery?" James asked.

"My wife is good at cutting," he was assured.

So for the next two months a long correspondence went on between my mother and Henry James, much of

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COMPTON MACKENZIE, *noted British novelist, is the author of* The Vanity Girl, Rich Relatives, The East Wind, Mr. Roosevelt *and many other books. He was received into the Catholic Church at Capri in* 1914. *He was later the first Catholic Lord Rector of Glasgow University since the sixteenth century.*

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it in the shape of very long and very elaborately phrased telegrams from the playwright in which he would surrender two or three words at a time. However, the play was tried out in the provinces early in 1891, and finally produced in London at the Opera Comique Theatre in September of that year.

To return to Sheffield for a moment. After dinner, my father asked Henry James if he would care to see *The School for Scandal,* which was being played that night. So James went, and at the end of the performance came round to my father's dressing-room. For some time he talked about anything except the performance, until the actor-manager asked at last:

"Well, what did you think of *The School for Scandal?*"

Henry James shook his head in retrospective perplexity. "A curious old play," he said at last, half to himself. "A very curious old play."

Henry James had something approaching horror of the eighteenth century. Many years later, when my mother begged his good offices to draw William Heinemann's attention to my first novel, *The Passionate Elopement,* which had just been submitted for his approval, he kindly wrote to Heinemann but expressed his concern at my wasting any of what he called my "latent energy" on that dreadful century.

★

THE last time I saw Henry James was in October, 1914, just before I was returning to Capri after various vain efforts to get into the war. He received me at the flat off Cheyne Walk with a kind of ceremonious warmth and led me to his study.

"And now, my dear boy, make yourself as comfortable as, in this monstrous time of war, comfort either of body or of mind is . . ." he paused to grasp at the adjective floating for a moment out of his reach, and then, just as his fingers were closing upon it, or rather (I become Jamesian myself as the memory of the scene recurs)—or rather pausing like a butterfly-hunter, net in air, to swoop upon the perfect adjective and imprison it in the reticulation of his prose—at that moment his housekeeper came into the room. Henry James looked round for the epithet now well on its way to escape, desperation in his mild and magnificent eye, and then his housekeeper said gently but most firmly:

"It's about the marmalade, Mr. James."

"Marmalade?" he ejaculated.

"Marmalade from the Army and Navy Stores," she insisted.

Henry James turned to me.

"Will you, my dear boy, try to entertain—or perhaps not so much entertain as engage yourself with a book while I devote a minute or two of most unwilling attention, or rather tortured concentration upon one of these hideous encounters with domestic necessity. A vast emporium, one of those appalling achievements of our modern craving for the huge, the immense, looms between

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myself and this delightful company of yours, to the enjoyment of which I have been looking forward with a so lively . . ."

"Mr. James," his housekeeper interposed, with hardly concealed impatience, "the man from the Army and Navy Stores is waiting for the order."

"In one moment, Mrs. Dash. I will not keep you a moment. Now, my dear boy, here is our dear H. G. Wells's last book. Full of that Wellsian quality which sometimes flows perhaps a little too . . . or you may rather beguile yourself for a moment while I surrender to the remorseless ritual which these domestic conveniences demand from us . . . yes, here is our dear Arnold Bennett's last . . ."

While Henry James was picking up book after book on the table and bumbling round them like a great irresolute bee, his housekeeper was tapping the floor with her foot.

"Mr. James, please," she protested.

The great novelist seated himself at his desk and, pen poised above the notepaper, looked anxiously up at his housekeeper.

"How would you . . . how shall I address the apex of this pyramid . . . the . . . er . . . director of this magnificent display of co-operative energy?"

"Mr. James, just write the order please and the man will take it", she almost pleaded.

"And what was the peculiar title of the condiment which we seek to import into this so humble corner of this vast London of ours, Mrs. Dash?"

"Mr. James, we were going to order six jars of that Oxford marmalade you liked."

From the corner of my eye I watched the operation of writing that order as Henry James' pen advanced to the paper and drew back and advanced again, and again drew back and then hovered above the notepaper, making a traceless pattern upon the air in a kind of saraband to which the housekeeper's foot tapped quite out of time.

At last the pen descended upon the paper and the large angular script flowed across it. The six jars of marmalade were ordered, and with a sigh of exhaustion and relief Henry James came back to his guest, apologizing once more for the interruption and full of solicitude for the way I had been able to pass the time while the marmalade was being ordered.

Then he asked me about the novel I was going to write, and I had as I thought told him the theme of *Guy and Pauline,* but he said: "I cannot admit that I am any nearer to knowing what your next book is going to be about, but I suppose that this was to be expected. I remember I once asked our dear George Meredith that very question and after a long and, as it no doubt seemed to him, ample reply he had told me precisely nothing."

Just before I said farewell to Henry James on that October afternoon thirty-five years ago, I told him it was my intention to revise and possibly rewrite altogether my novel *Carnival* in the light of my experience. He held up his hands in a wide gesture of dismay.

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"You alarm . . . you . . . appall me with such news," he declared, his large smooth face momentarily puckered with genuine distress. "I once wasted ten . . . indeed, twelve precious years in foolishly supposing that in the light of experience I could grope my way towards a more . . . towards that always elusive . . . in short that I could add yet something to what, when it was written, I had given all that I could give at that time. Renounce this preposterous ambition of yours, my dear boy. You have been granted the boon which is all a novelist should beg for himself. You have been granted that boon with a generosity beyond that accorded to any of your young contemporaries. You fling the ball up against the wall and it rebounds immediately into your hands. Whereas I . . . ." he looked round that room in the flat from the windows of which one saw the river shimmering through a filigree of boughs now almost bare of leaves, "whereas I fling the ball against the wall, when it rebounds not into my hands, but on to the next wall and from that wall to the next." He followed with apprehensive glance the flight of that ghostly ball round the room. "Until," he concluded, "at last it falls to the ground and dribbles very, very slowly toward my feet, and I, all my old bones aching, stoop, and most laboriously pick it up."

I am tempted to hope that one or two of the young writers of today who suppose that complicacy and obscurity are admirable qualities in themselves may wonder if the Master himself would have applauded a deliberate cultivation of them.

Books

The United States and the Soviet Union: Some Quaker Proposals for Peace. Yale. $1.00.

ON 40 PAGES, a "working party" established by the American Friends Service Committee (Quaker) offers a masterfully condensed analysis of the basic conflict of our day and a set of recommendations aiming at the relaxation of tension.

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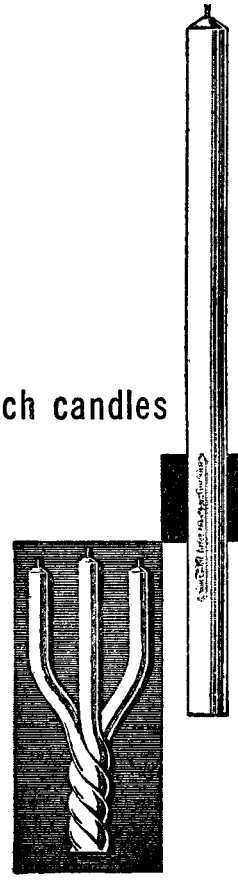
In consequence, steps should be taken to decrease the tension. The Quakers understand that action ought to be bilateral. But, quite realistically, they limit their suggestions to that which could and should be done by America. First, restrictions on exports to Russia and Eastern Europe should be reduced and credits extended. Second, efforts should be displayed to make Germany a unified nation neutral in the present day conflict. Third, the United States should constantly affirm its faith in



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and loyalty to the United Nations; single out issues on which it could vote with the Soviet Union; and take the initiative in a new effort to achieve disarmament.

Out of these proposals, the second is obviously unattainable. A unified and neutral Germany would need a constitution. If it is democratic, Germany will be inclined to support the West; if it is of the "people's democracy" type, it will be dominated by the Soviet. A constitution midway between the two types is, however, unthinkable.

As to the first and the third proposals, they are in the spirit of appeasement, a policy which has been tried and has utterly failed.

It appears that very little can be done by America to decrease the tension. The fear of war is engendered by the Marxian doctrine in its Kremlin interpretation: class war is the basic law of social becoming; in our day, this class struggle is embodied in the opposition between "bourgeois" America and "proletarian" Russia; consequently, the conflict is irreconcilable and must result in war. The Marxian doctrine is flexible, say the Quakers. It certainly is, but so long as this flexibility has not manifested itself in the analysis of Soviet-American relations, the dangerous tension will persist, independent of any effort on the part of America to prove its good will and its genuine desire for peace. N. S. TIMASHEFF.

In Sicily. Elio Vittorini. New Directions. $2.50.

THIS is the first publication in the United States of one of Vittorini's novels. The author is among several contemporary Italian writers whose works have begun to be translated since the war and who, with the younger painters and film directors, are causing more and more foreign attention to be paid to the current arts of Italy. *In Sicily* is the earliest of Vittorini's five novels. It has an exuberance of style which is controlled in his later books, but it is not too annoying here because it belongs to the robustness and compassion that infuse all his writing. Here, too, are his other qualities, the happy rhythm of speech, the sharp eye drawing character, the tender evocation of a simple, harsh story. Here is a good introduction to an exceptionally able writer.

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• REVIEWERS •

N. S. TIMASHEFF is a professor of Political Science at Fordham University. He is the author of *The Great Retreat, Three Worlds, The Law of Soviet Russia* and other modern political studies.

FLORENCE CODMAN is one of the publishers of a series of books called the Arrow Editions. She contributes literary criticism and reviews to several leading periodicals and is currently writing a history of early American vaudeville and variety.

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